

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1379

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COMUSFORAZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L PONTA DELEGADA 0019

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUB: AZOREAN DEVELOPMENT-CONVERSATION WITH JUNTO MEMBER MONJARDINO

REF: PONTA DELEGADA 477

1. IN CONVERSATION ON JANUARY 11, INDEPENDENT JUNTA MEMBER FROM
TERCIERA, ALVARO MONJARDINO, SAID HE WAS WORRIED THAT
THE GOP WOULD FORCE HIM TO BECOME A SEPARATIST. MONJARDINO EXPLAINED
HE HAS NEVER BEEN INVOLVED IN FLA, AND HAS NOT SUPPORTED INDEPENDENCE,

BUT UNLESS THE GOP MODIFIED ITS NEW DECREE LAW WHICH REDUCES THE
POWERS OF THE JUNTA REGIONAL, HE WILL HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE.

HE EMPHASIZED THE COMPLETE UNITY OF THE JUNTA,
FROM CONSERVATIVE JANOME CORRIEA TO MILITANT SOCIALIST GOULART,
ON THE DECREE LAW ISSUE.

2. MOMJARDINO EXPLAINED THAT WHEN GEN MAGALHAES RETURNED
TO AZORES HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY JUNTA HAD TELEGRAPHED THE GOP
OBJECTING TO THE NEW DECREE LAW (REFTEL) SINCE HE SAW NO
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IT AND WHAT THE JUNTA HAD REQUESTED.

MONJARDINO WHO THEN SPENT HOURS EXPLAINING THE JUNTA'S
OBJECTIONS TO THE MAGALHAES WAS DISMAYED WITH MAGALHAES LACK

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OF UNDERSTANDING.

3. MONJARDINO SAID ONE OF THE PROBLEMS IS THAT THE GOP CONTINUALLY MAKES THE MISTAKE OF BELIEVING MADERA AND THE AZORES ARE ALIKE AND TREATS THEM THE SAME. IN FACT THE AZORES ARE MUCH MORE POLITICALLY DEVELOPED AND HAVE A DIFFERENT ECONOMY , CULTURE, AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE FROM MADEIRA AND MUST BE TREATED SEPARATELY.

4. MONJARDINO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF QUICK APPROVAL OF A STATUTE OF AUTONOMY FOR THE AZORES. THE JUNTA AND ITS PROBLEMS, INCLUDING THE ISSUE OF THE NEW DECREE LAW, ARE TRANSITIONAL, BUT A STATUTE OF AUTONOMY ESTABLISHING A PERMANENT GOVERNMENT AND A DEGREE OF ECONOMY AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE IS CRUCIAL FOR AZOREAN DEVELOPMENT AND NECESSARY TO MODERATE THE EFFECT IN THE AZORES OF THE PORTUGUESE ECONOMIC CRISIS.

5. MONJARDINO SAID HE HAD HEARD RUMORS THAT A NEW BASE AGREEMENT HAD BEEN SIGNED AND ASKED IF IT WERE TRUE. I EXPLAINED I HAD HEARD NOTHING AND WAS SURE I WOULD BE INFORMED OF ANY MOVEMENT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. MONJARDINO SAID AZOREANS EXPECT TO HAVE A VOICE IN ANY BASE NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT BOTH THE GOP AND THE USG SHOULD KEEP THAT IN MIND.

6. COMMENT: MARJARDINO WITH GEN MAGALHAES AND JUNTA VEEP JACOME CORREIA, LEFT FOR LISBON EARLY JAN 12 TO DISCUSS THE JUNTA'S OBJECTIONS TO THE GOP'S NEW DECREE LAW WITH PRIME MINISTER AZEVEVO. THE ARTICULATE MONJARDINO, WHO IS WELL KNOWN LAWYER AND IS HIGHLY RESPECTED THROUGH OUT THE AZORES, DESCRIBES HIS POLITICAL POSITION AS BETWEEN THAT OF THE PPD AND PS. HE IS ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL AUTHORS OF THE DRAFT STATUTE OF AUTONOMY AND OF THE JUNTA'S PROPOSAL FOR A DECREE LAW INCREASING ITS POWERS AND THUS ONE OF THE BEST SPOKESMAN FOR THE AZOREAN POSITION BEFORE THE GOP. TO THE JUNTA AND AZOREANS IN GENERAL THE GOP'S POSITION ON THE NEW DECREE LAW IS AN INDICATION OF ITS WILLINGNESS TO GRANT THE AZORES AN EXTENSIVE AUTONOMY. IF MONJARDINO AND OTHERS
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REPRESENTATIVES
CAN NOT PERSUADE THE GOP TO MODIFY THE DECREE LAW TO AZOREAN SATISFACTION, THEN AZOREANS WILL LOSE ALL HOPE FOR THE EXTENSIVE AUTONOMY THEY BELIEVE NECESSARY AND WILL FEEL FORCED TO TURN TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE, HOWEVER RELUCTANTLY.
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